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A.D. 1497. William, son of Bishop O'Gallagher, [fell in battle, near Rathmelton].

A.D. 1498. A great mournful news throughout all Ireland this year, viz., the following: MacManus Maguire died this year, i.e., Cathal Oge, the son of Cathal, &c. . . . He was a Canon Chorister of Armagh, and in the bishopric of Clogher, and Dean of Lough Erne, and Parson of Innis Caein in Lough Erne, and the representative of a bishop for fifteen years before his death. He was a precious stone, a bright gem, a luminous star, a treasury of wisdom, a fruitful branch of the Canon, and a fountain of charity, meekness, and mildness, a dove in purity of heart, and a turtle in chastity, &c. &c.

This curious obit of the distinguished Cathal Maguire, compiler of the *Annals of Ulster*, is from the pen of his continuator in that work, Roger Cassidy, as translated in the Dublin copy of the *Annals of Ulster*; and we have introduced it here, because the eminent and famous individual concerned, who is in it so highly lauded, was himself one of those married clergymen, of whom we now write. Dr. O'Donovan, indeed, seems to indulge in a strange sort of doubtfulness on the subject, his note concerning it running thus—"Cathal Oge, compiler of the Annals of Ulster. He had several legitimate sons, though apparently in Holy Orders." Why, "apparently?" after the aggregation of clerical titles bestowed on him in the Annals. Surely, if ever there were a clergyman in Ireland, "at all at all," in full orders, Cathal Maguire was so, beyond all doubt.

And yet, after all, parson, dean, bishop's vicar, canon chorister, and what not, although having several children, he was able, wonderful man, to leave among his countrymen a memory likening him to a dove in purity of heart, and a turtle in chastity; no Father Colgan, alas, being at hand, to explain to the poor ignoramus "the sacrilegious adulterer" that he was in reality. Let us return, however, to the thread of our subject, and the testimony of the "Annals."

Same year (A.D. 1498). Cormac, the son of Owen, son of the Bishop MacCoghlan, Official of Clonmacnoise, and a learned ecclesiastic, in Christo quievit [*Annals of Ulster. Dublin*].

A.D. 1499. Sile, daughter of Bishop Maguire, i.e., of Roe, the bishop, died this year, [from the same].

A.D. 1501. John, the son of [bishop] Rossa, son of Thomas Oge Maguire . . . Parson of Aghalurcher, &c. . . . died.

A.D. 1502. The daughter of Rory Caech Maguire, died in this year, i.e., Meave, who was wife to Teige MacGillaighille [now Lilly], and who had brought forth children to the young abbot. [*Annals of Ulster*. It does not appear whether Teige Lilly was the "young abbot's" name, or whether he married the widow of one so named.]

A.D. 1504. Andrew Magrath, son of the Coarb of Termon Daveog [i.e., the clergyman of Termonmagrath], died.

A.D. 1511. Hugh, son of Felim, son of Marcus, slain by James, son of John, son of Bishop Maguire.

A.D. 1513. The sons of Brian, son of Bishop O'Gallagher [pursued after plunderers of Donegal, and recovered what they were stealing].

A.D. 1514. Pierce, son of the great Abbot Maguire, died.

A.D. 1515. James, son of Thomas Roe, son of the Abbot Maguire, was slain.

A.D. 1518. Hugh, son of [bishop] Rossa, son of Thomas Oge Maguire, . . . Parson of Aghalurcher died . . .

The son of MacManus (Redmond, son of Cathal Oge MacManus), charitable and humane man, died. [See A.D. 1498 sup.].

A.D. 1521. The Prior of Devenish, died; i.e., Redmond, son of the Parson of Inismacsaint [in Lough Erne], a clerical, kind, charitable, humane man.

A.D. 1527. MacManus Maguire (Thomas Oge, son of Cathal Oge, &c.), died. [This was the son of the compiler of the *Annals of Ulster*, whose death is recorded above under the year 1498. O'Donovan.]

A.D. 1530. Celia, daughter of O'Fallon, and wife of Carby, son of the Prior, a beautiful and humane lady, died.

Hugh O'Flanagan, son of the Parson of Inismacsaint, died . . .

A.D. 1531. James O'Flanagan, son of the Parson of Inis [macsaint], a man of great name and renown in his country, died.

A.D. 1540. The sons of William, son of Bishop O'Gallagher, namely, William Oge and Hugh Gruama, were slain by the sons of O'Boyle.

A.D. 1541. James Oge, son of the Prior Mac Coghlan, was treacherously beheaded by Kedagh O'Melaghlin.

A.D. 1566. Rose, daughter of Cuonnaught Maguire, the Coarb, died.

The word *Coarb* in the earlier times of Irish Church history, before the coming of the English, undoubtedly meant the principal ecclesiastic of the Church with which he was connected, the successor and representative of the original founder, and, as such, possessed of the lands belonging to the establishment, as well as all other honours and emoluments conceded by common usage to persons holding such an office. But when the

country came under the power of England and Rome, every exertion was made to transfer the power and emoluments of the *Coarbs* to diocesan dignitaries, and thus to provide for the endowment of cathedral corporations with both income and ecclesiastical honours, at the expense of the old Irish Church dignitaries, who had been alike independent of England and Rome. The old Irish abbeys were discouraged and fell to decay, and new and splendid Anglo-Norman ones, in close connection with Rome, arose to fill their places. The *Coarbs*, however, tenaciously held to their hereditary possessions, and the result of the struggle between their national influence and that of Rome would seem to have been, in many cases, that while the power and jurisdiction, the ecclesiastical rank and office, passed over to the Roman functionaries, endowed from one source or another, in the course of time, the lands continued to be held on by hereditary *Coarbs* and *Erenachs*, retaining still these names, though no longer necessarily ordained to the priesthood or episcopate, as their predecessors, the early abbots, had been, but in many cases admitted only to the *prima tonsura* or lowest degree of holy orders. The *Coarbs* above mentioned in the Annals were probably, for the most part, of the regular sort, ordained men, as their predecessors had been.

But in whatever degree this may, or may not, have been the case, the entries above afford a very sufficient evidence as to what was the practice concerning the enforcement of clerical celibacy in Ireland in those days. A very large amount of additional evidence on the subject might, if there were need, be deduced from our ancient Registers, those of the 15th century in particular, in which occur numerous *dispensations to men born of priests*, to be admitted, that defect notwithstanding, to holy orders, and ecclesiastical benefices; the Pope granting to such a one, that, although *de presbytero genitus et soluta* ["born of a priest and an unmarried woman"], as her marriage to such a person, against the canons, would, of course, be null and void, he may, for his personal worth, be promoted to so and so. But the evidence already adduced in these papers on the subject, is in itself sufficiently conclusive on the point concerned, and we shall content ourselves with having made such a passing allusion to the other for the present.

R. K.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO BE GOOD BY PROXY?

We have to request our readers' attention to a few thoughts on a question which lies at the bottom of many of the points of difference between Protestants and Roman Catholics. Everyone knows how the Church of Rome encourages the people to rely on the merit of good works done by others—how she teaches that the saints have performed what are called "works of supererogation"—that is to say, works more than their own salvation requires, and which they can, therefore, afford to have reckoned for the benefit of others—how she teaches them to believe that if they become members of certain confraternities they will be entitled to share in the merit of the good works done by the rest of the society; and how Roman Catholics are ready to pay priests to perform certain religious exercises for them, or to pay persons to go on pilgrimages and undergo penances on their behalf. The case, in fact, is supposed to be similar to that of a man who owes a sum of money to his neighbour. If some friend is so kind as to pay a debt for you, and in your name, the creditor is as well satisfied as if you had paid it yourself out of your own purse, because all he cares for is to obtain his money for his own benefit.

But we ask our readers to reflect for a moment and say whether this illustration represents correctly the relation in which we stand to God. Every one will acknowledge that our Divine Master has no need of the services of his creatures, and that, therefore, the good works which he requires of us are not for his benefit, but for our own—for our own moral improvement. "Can a man be profitable unto God as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?"—Job xxii.

Now, just see what an important bearing this fact—that it is not for the Almighty's sake, but for our own, that we are required to worship and obey him—has upon the question whether such services can be performed by proxy?

Suppose that a man were to offer a map to a publisher for sale, it is no matter to the purchaser whether the man drew the map himself or got some friend to draw it for him; provided the map is honestly the seller's property, and is well executed, that is all the buyer cares for. But, on the other hand, suppose that a schoolmaster sets a boy to draw a map, by way of practice, in order that he may learn to be a good draftsman, then if the boy should get a school-fellow to do it for him, and should show it up as his own, he would be reproved and punished; for the task was set him not for the sake of the map (which the schoolmaster could have drawn better for himself), but as an exercise for the improvement of the learner.

Now, it cannot be doubted that it is the latter case which answers to ours in reference to our divine master; and that since "no man can be profitable unto God," and since He cannot stand in need of our services, it must be

solely for our own moral improvement that the works which he requires of us are demanded. In arguing, then, with those who rely on the merits of the saints, we have no occasion to enter on the question whether the penances and austerities recorded in lives of the saints are real good works or not; nor, again, whether it is possible for any man to perform more good works than God requires of him, or to live so free from sin, as not to need, at least, all his merits for his own justification. Important as these questions are, they are superseded by the consideration we have been urging, that since good works are required of us for our own improvement, not for God's benefit, it must be impossible that another person should perform our duty in our stead, or that his good works, real or supposed, should be considered as done by ourselves.

TALK OF THE ROAD.—No. XXVIII.

"WELL, Pat," said Jem, when they met last, "is there anything new to talk of?"

"I don't know about its being new, Jem," said Pat: "maybe it's not old enough; but it's an old thing with me, anyway."

"And what is it," said Jem.

"It's confession, Jem," said Pat.

"And were you at confession, Pat?" said Jem.

"No, Jem," said Pat, "I wasn't. It's long enough since I was there."

"And was it reading the Bible put you off it, Pat?" said Jem.

"No, Jem, it wasn't that put me off it," said Pat: "sure, I quit confession, like a deal of the boys, long afore ever I took to reading; so, it wasn't that."

"Well, there's a deal of the boys surely that doesn't read the Bible, nor go to confession either, said Jem;" "more maybe than does go, a great deal. And I'm thinking they're getting more and more; and what's the reason, if it's not the reading that does it?"

"Well, the times done a deal of it, Jem," said Pat. "Sure, it was the famine put me off it; for I hadn't the dust to pay. Not but what the priest would hear my confession if I hadn't the money; but, then, you know, Jem, they don't like not to see the money; and people doesn't like to go without the money: and that put me off it first."

"Well, but Pat," said Jem, "the times got better, and sure you might get the shilling then?"

"Aye, I could," said Pat; "but, then, how would I remember all the sins I committed in five years maybe? And if I couldn't mind them, how would I confess them? And, then, where was the use of going? So, one way or another, I quit confession long afore I took to the reading."

"Deed, Pat," said Jem, "there's a deal, I believe, quit it just in the same way. But, are you going to take to it again now?"

"Not till I find it in the Bible, Jem," said Pat.

"And what set you talking about it, then?" said Jem.

"The wife, Biddy, set me talking about it," said Pat.

"Sure, she was at confession, and she wouldn't quit talking about it, wanting to get me to go, too."

"And what did you say to her?" said Jem.

"Won't I confess my sins to God," says I; "and won't He be faithful and just to forgive me my sins?" says I.

"And what good will that do you," says she, "if you don't get absolution from the priest?"

"And do you mean," says I, "that if God forgives me, the priest can send me to hell?" says I.

"But how will you know it," says she, "if the priest doesn't say it?"

"Well," says I, "I suppose that's the good of confession and absolution, just to make it more sure when we hear the priest say it."

"To be sure it is," says she; "sure, then, we're sure we are forgiven, when we hear it said; and how would we know it without?"

"And mustn't we make a good confession, Biddy, dear?" says I.

"To be sure we must," says she; "it's no good without that."

"Then, the priest saying the absolution over me," says I, "is just no security at all to me, only as far as I can be sure that I made a good confession?" says I.

"Well," says she, "sure, it's the easiest thing in life to make a good confession to the priest; sure, if you do what pleases him, he won't be hard on you at all."

"Well, Biddy," says I, "it be to be a good confession, or it's no absolution after all; and if the priest lets me off a good confession, sure he is only letting me off the absolution."

"It's the easiest thing in life," says she, "to make a good confession to the priest."

"And isn't it just as easy," says I, "to make the same confession to God? But, Biddy, dear," says I, "what have you to confess to the priest?"

"All my mortal sins," says she.

"Since when?" says I.

"Since I went to confession afore," says she.